UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/493
10 June 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 10 JUNE 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ETHIOPIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you press statements issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on 9 June 1998 concerning Eritrea's renewed aggression against Ethiopia and its expulsion and detention of Ethiopian nationals residing in Eritrea.

These latest Eritrean actions clearly demonstrate that the regime in Asmara is bent on further escalating the conflict, while at the same time attempting to hoodwink the international community by sending self-contradictory and confusing signals regarding efforts for a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Duri MOHAMMED
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

98-16380 (E) 100698

/...

Annex I

Press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia on 9 June 1998

ERITREA EXPELS OVER 3,000, DETAINS 530 ETHIOPIANS

In the persistent campaign of terror against the Ethiopian people, the Eritrean authorities have expelled over 3,000 from Eritrea and detained 530 Ethiopians. Two thousand were herded into different parts of Eritrea, their belongings were confiscated, and they were driven out of the country in the most inhuman manner. One thousand more were evicted empty-handed from Assab alone, and 530 others have been detained.

Ethiopia calls upon the international community to condemn this massive displacement of innocent civilians as a flagrant violation of human rights.

The Eritrean atrocities against Ethiopia's civilian population contrasts with the meticulous care taken by Ethiopia to protect civilians in this time of crisis.

Ethiopia is gravely concerned that the action of the Eritrean authorities is consistent with their objective of inciting animosity between the peoples of the two countries. Unless pressure is brought to bear on the Eritrean authorities, they will not desist from committing more atrocities against civilian Ethiopian citizens residing in Eritrea.

Annex II

Press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia on 9 June 1998

FRESH ERITREAN AGGRESSION REPULSED

While efforts are continuing to bring about a peaceful resolution of the crisis created by the Eritrean aggression against Ethiopia, the Eritrean Government has continued with its aggression by launching an attack on the Zalambasa front at 5.30 a.m. today, 9 June 1998. This attack, which was attempted three times, has been repulsed by the Ethiopian Defence Forces, inflicting heavy casualties on the Eritrean invading forces.

This latest act of aggression by the Eritrean authorities demonstrates once again without any doubt that the regime in Asmara is still committed to continuing its hostilities against Ethiopia.

The Eritrean authorities are known for their habit of fabricating lies and baseless propaganda in their desire to hold Ethiopia responsible for clashes initiated by themselves which result in heavy defeat suffered by their invading forces.

The Eritrean Government misinforms the international media by shifting the blame to Ethiopia when they themselves invaded the country, started the war and unleashed atrocities on innocent lives, proving that they had been preparing for the war.

In contrast, Ethiopia, for its part, is committed to the peaceful resolution of the crisis while taking all necessary measures for the exercise of its right of self-defence.

The actions of the Eritrean leaders are completely at variance with the recommendations submitted by the United States of America and Rwanda. Their actions are also contrary to their attempts to pose as peace-seekers at the ongoing Ouagadougou summit of African leaders.

Details on the latest aggression by Eritrea will be made available as more information is received.

Annex III

Press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia on 9 June 1998

ANOTHER ERITREAN FORCES' ATTACK REPULSED

Eritrean invading forces were badly beaten when they launched repeated attacks against Ethiopian Defence Forces on the Zalambasa front. The attacks, which began at 5.30 a.m. today, 9 June 1998, were launched four times. At each attempt, the invading forces were repulsed with heavy casualties, and on the fourth attempt, which took place at about 2 p.m., they were decimated, with the remnants retreating in disarray, leaving behind their dead and wounded, while some were taken prisoner.

While representatives of the Eritrean authorities were trying to hoodwink the summit of the Organization of African Unity in Ouagadougou, their forces attempted to mount attacks well inside Ethiopian territory four times in one day.

Ethiopian commanders in the field reckon that the size of the invading forces was so formidable that it must have consisted of a major portion of the Eritrean army, while appreciating the involvement and participation of the local people in the defence of Zalambasa front.

The attacks were launched while the representative of Eritrea was calling for an end to hostilities in a speech he made to the summit of African leaders. The action of the Eritrean invading forces is contrary to what the representative was telling the world, for motives that are known only to the Eritrean Government.

Details of likely clashes provoked by the Eritrean forces will be given when available.